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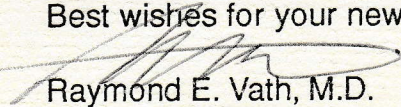
Dear Tania,

The Mercy Corps committee has continued to attempt to explore the complaints which you have made about your father, and have made at least a little progress. As I stated in my last letter to you that verifiable data is essential in dealing with situations such as this. As you directed our attention to some of your father's unhealthy interpersonal skills, manipulative I believe you said, we have identified several instances of this in his relationship with Mercy Corps people and issues and therefore we are now in the process of therapeutically confronting this. This is enabling us to stop the inappropriateness while guiding him to appropriate behaviors.

While he has admitted with significant remorse the fact that he did not provide protection for you in your very early years, when you were left in the care of persons that took advantage of your innocence, he is equally adamant that some of the more severe behaviors that you accused him of did not occur. As we have not been able to obtain the cooperation of the home room teacher that you first complained to, nor have we received pages of the diary which you have kept, we do not have sufficient confirmed evidence to proceed as decisively as we would like. I have enclosed an article from the Seattle Times about a similar situation that illustrates the importance of this kind of information, for in this instance an abusive teacher would have gone free had the diary not been produced. This is the importance of your diary to us.

You stated to us that one of your great frustrations was that no one would listen to you or believe you. As part of your story does check out, I hope you will realize that we are attempting to listen to you, but as we are bound by the rules of fairness to your father as well as to you, I hope you will help us fill in the gaps as we are requesting. We do not need an entire diary, but if a page or two from the time from age 12 to your first hospitalization might be the data we need.

Best wishes for your new school year,


Raymond E. Vath, M.D.
Chairman of the Board

Diary entry finally leads to school abuse case

BY KEITH ERVIN
Seattle Times South bureau

FEDERAL WAY — A junior high-school girl confided in her diary five years ago that a teacher had molested her sexually.

Questioned by an alarmed parent, she reported the incident to school administrators. But when the teacher denied the accusation and a second teacher couldn't corroborate part of the girl's testimony, the case was dropped.

The Illahee Junior High School teacher remained in the classroom.

Last week Federal Way School District Superintendent Richard Harris suspended the teacher with pay and initiated proceedings to fire him for sexual misconduct.

The district's case is based on the testimony of three former students, including the one who came forward in 1988. The other two said the teacher had touched them inappropriately in the late 1970s and early 1980s, Harris reported.

The teacher denies the accusations and is contesting the attempt to dismiss him. A closed hearing will be held, with the Federal Way Education Association representing the teacher.

"We're devastated when these

kinds of allegations are made," said FWEA President Bill Hansen. "It's a reflection on the whole teaching profession. These are allegations at this point."

The 38-year-old teacher has taught at Illahee since 1979. His suspension was announced to his colleagues yesterday.

Harris has reported the allegations to King County police and to state officials in charge of teacher certification.

This summer, Harris asked the school district's law firm, Vandenberg & Johnson, to investigate suspicions voiced by several parents and former teachers that three male teachers at Illahee had behaved inappropriately with students.

School officials so far have reported no evidence of wrongdoing by the other two teachers, who remain in their classrooms.

Investigators reopened the 1988 case because of new allegations. Har-

ris declined to say why the new probe led to disciplinary action the second time around.

An important new factor is the emergence of other accusers. Harris said the girl with the diary didn't provide a written statement five years ago, but he declined to say why.

Harris defended the 1988 decision not to discipline the teacher. "It was handled in the right way and the proper way," he said. "It just didn't go any place for lack of evidence."